

Text: Exodus 2:11-25

Title: "The deliverer's preparation"

Time: 2/2/2020 am

Place: NBBC

Introduction: Last week we ended our time in the Word with verse 10 of this chapter, which tells us that Moses grew up in the household of the daughter of Pharaoh. We noted the importance of that context to the education Moses received in preparation to become one of Egypt's future rulers.

Dr. David Rohl (*Exodus-Myth or History?*) relies on the remnants of Artapanus's *Concerning the Jews* to draw some conclusions from this Egyptian historian about the military career of Moses as a young Egyptian prince. He believes that Artapanus's mention of the name of a verifiable pharaoh means that he "had access to some kind of official record in the Alexandrian library, which appeared to mention the deeds of Moses at the this time in the 13th Dynasty" (140).

In 2003, Vivian Davies of the British Museum granted an interview to *The Times* (London) in which he described his finding 22 lines of biographical inscription in the tombs of El-Kab, which revealed for the first time that Egypt had nearly been wiped out by Cushite invasions from the south during this time period.

Artapanus mentions this conflict in his history of this period, and he says that Moses led a ten-year campaign that pushed the Cushites out of Egypt, and that ended with a peace treaty that involved the Kushite chieftan's daughter marrying Prince Moses. Rohl believes he sees Scriptural evidence for the validity of this history in Num. 12:1, where Moses is criticized by Miriam and Aaron for having a

Cushite or Ethiopian wife. That reference has always been a difficult one to explain, with most commentators believing that Zipporah had died and Moses had taken a new wife, but how she came from Cush has always been a mystery. Rohl believes that this mystery is now explained.

So historians tells us that all of this was part of Moses's preparation to be God's human instrument of deliverance. Although undoubtedly invaluable experience for leading a nation, this part of Moses's life goes completely unmentioned as preparation for leading God's people.

Instead, our passage mentions two other preparations of this deliverer that readied his life to be used in a mighty way by God. We will notice them together this morning, and the see that the last verses of the passage tell us how the lives of Israelites were being prepared to be delivered.

I. Moses made a life-changing choice (vv. 11-15a).

Illustration: David Rohl speculates that Moses had become very popular after he delivered Egypt from Cush, and that jealousy must have arisen in the house of pharaoh against him in this regard. Pragmatically speaking, one might further speculate that had Moses done what was necessary to remain popular in Egypt, he could have done his people more good than he was able to in exile.

Application: But instead we see Moses going out to his brothers and looking with pity on their slavery (v. 11). He had grown to a point in life in which every young adult must make a choice. Moses was 40 years old when he made his. He made it long before any of the events of this chapter expelled him from Egypt. He had already made the choice of faith described by Heb. 11:24-27.

As Moses went out to his people on that day, he did so not in fear of pharaoh, but rather seeing Him who is invisible. Notice how the author of Hebrews (likely Luke) describes this choice:

1. Moses chose one people over another people (vv. 24-25a). On one side stood the powerful, the popular, the numerous, the praised – the household of pharaoh’s daughter. On the other stood the weak, the despised, the oppressed, and the suffering – the people of God. The choice is clear if you are choosing only by sight – you go with the household of pharaoh. But Moses chose the people of God in spite of their condition because he made the choice by faith in what God had said about those people.

At times I feel that the people of our local church have much in common with the people that Moses chose. We are the weak, the despised, the oppressed, and the suffering. We are the few. But what does God say about the people of our local church? He says we are “the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). Will we see what we are by faith in what God says, and chose to identify with what is lightly esteemed in this world?

2. Moses chose one experience over another (v. 25-26). On the one hand were all the pleasures, comforts, and ease of sin; on the other was suffering and affliction. Last week we mentioned a difference between animals and humans made in the image of God. As humans, we can suppress our natural appetites in order to do our duty.

How can this make sense to anyone, to make a choice like this? Scripture gives us two answers:

(1) both the pleasures of sin and the sufferings of righteousness are only temporary (v. 25, “for a season”; 2 Cor. 4:17, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory”);

(2) the sufferings of righteousness are the reproach of Christ (v. 26). When we sacrifice and suffer for the sake of righteousness, we do so as those who follow the One who sacrificed and suffered for the sake of our righteousness. We are willing to make this choice, because Christ was willing to bear the reproach of our sin on the cross of Calvary for us. For this reason Moses chose the experience of suffering over the pleasure of sin.

3. Moses chose one King over another (v. 27). On the one hand was the king you could see, who said that the men of Israel were born to be the slaves of pharaoh, that they were little more than animals. On the other hand was the unseen King, who has said that the men of Israel were born to be a chosen nation of priests who were servants of Jehovah God. Again, Moses’s faith made the right choice.

Our text literally tells us that he endured because he *kept on focusing* on the One who cannot be seen. Our author will later exhort his readers to do the same, “Run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:1-2).

To choose the right king is to do with Him the opposite of what this Hebrew man does with Moses, the one whom God had chosen to be his leader (Exod. 2:14, “Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?”). Is that our attitude toward Christ’s authority in our life? Is that our attitude toward the human spiritual authority that Christ has established in our life for our good?

Moses made a life-changing choice when he said that God would be his prince and judge. That choice always involves the consequences described here, but it is always the right choice. Have you made that life changing choice? Have you said, "I choose God to be my prince and my judge"?

II. Moses learned a life-regulating patience (vv. 15b-22).

Application: When we studied the heroics of the midwives in chapter 1, I noted that the text never condemns the lie they told the pharaoh, which was in self-defense of their lives. Here, Moses commits murder, and the case is entirely different. Verse 12 tells us, "And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand."

C.H. Mackintosh notes how this verse incriminates this act of the future man of God as premature and sinful: "There is no need of this [looking this way and that way] when a man is acting with and for God, and in the full intelligence of His mind, as to the detail of the work. . . . This action teaches a deep practical lesson to all the servants of God. There are two things by which it [looking this way and that way] is superinduced, namely, the fear of man's wrath, and the hope of man's favor. The servant of the living God should neither regard the one nor the other" (20).

The day would come when many abusive Egyptians would die under the judgment of God, but that time had not yet come. Moses commits murder because he lacks a life-regulating patience that every faithful servant of God needs for his calling. God still had forty years of waiting for Moses to do before he would be called to his great work of deliverance. Moses wanted to get it going ahead of time, and God was not in that, so those efforts failed.

Verse 21 speaks to a change of heart in Moses. No longer the powerful Egyptian prince who could single-handedly deliver his people, Moses became content to be a humble shepherd, to raise a family as a pilgrim in a strange land, and to learn at the feet of a new mentor, Reuel (also called Jethro), whose name meant "Friend of God."

This is how God works in our lives too. He makes us wait. He puts us in a position that seems ineffective. He allows the need for deliverance to persist for a long time before delivering. He asks that we humble ourselves to be taught by someone who has been the friend of God longer than we have been.

This life-regulating patience is critical to our ability to help deliver others. Do you and I have it? Are we patient followers or frustrated with the slowness of the pace? Are we humbly teachable with a view of how we might become better teachers of others? It took time for Moses to learn this life-regulating patience, and it will take the same for us.

III. Moses's God heard a life-saving cry (vv. 23-25).

Application: Here we read of the tender heart of God, who would deliver people in bondage. This is what makes our God the Redeemer. He would save Israel from the bondage of slavery, and He would save the sinner from the bondage of his sin. Their cry goes up to Him (v. 23), He hears their groaning (v. 24), He remembers His salvation promise to Abraham (v. 24), He sees (v. 25), and He knows (v. 25). Our God is a Redeemer. It is His great heart to save us.

God's method of salvation is to provide a human instrument to bring deliverance, and so in chapter 3 we will read of the call of Moses to be Israel's deliverer. Moses is God's

chosen instrument to save Israel from slavery, and as such he points us to Christ once again. Christ would be the Father's human instrument to redeem us from bondage to our sin.

Conclusion: The beauty of this parallel between Moses and Christ was not lost on Stephen, the first martyr of the church. He rebukes those of his day who had rejected Christ, and he does so from this passage, where an Israelite rejects Moses's leadership (Acts 7:23-29). Stephen's point is that people in his day had done the same thing to Christ that the Hebrew had done to Moses. They had "thrust him away, saying, 'Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?'"

Have we treated Jesus Christ that way? Are we guilty of failing to see that he is the divine-human instrument God has chosen to deliver us from our bondage to sin? Have we really invited Him to be the prince and judge over us, or have we thrust him away?

If we have to honestly answer that we have never made Christ our prince and our judge, perhaps for the first time this morning that will change. Perhaps now, given yet another chance by His grace and mercy, you will embrace your Deliverer and ask him to save you, and to become your prince and your judge. Perhaps you have sighed and cried in bondage to sin long enough. Perhaps you are ready for your Redeemer. Call on Him today.

“A man came – I think it was actually in Philadelphia – on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction – the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

– David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

*Preachers and Preaching*